



Community Dental Care

Quality Dental Care and Preventive Education for All
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 **DELTA DENTAL**

Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 26, 2017

Dental clinic for Rochester-area families in need celebrates grand opening

New community clinic to serve Southeastern region of Minnesota

ROCHESTER, MINN. – Community Dental Care cut the ribbon on its new clinic in Rochester last week, expanding access to oral health services for more than 10,000 Southeastern Minnesota children and adults in need.

Located on 2120 US Highway 14 East in Rochester, the clinic broke ground last September after receiving a \$1 million donation from Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation, with the mission of providing comprehensive, community-based oral health care for all. It unofficially opened this August, and provided care for 58 patients its first day of operation. Since August, the clinic has seen more than 1,200 patients – 95 percent of whom are on public programs or uninsured, 35 percent were children, 14 percent were emergency situations, and 42 percent were new patients. Since the clinic has opened, patient wait time has tremendously decreased, a trend the clinic hopes to continue.

“It has been a journey, and we still have five more dental patient rooms to equip, but we are almost there. I thank all of you who helped us make this clinic possible. I want to make this pledge to you, the Rochester community, that we will serve our patients with compassion and care—and give them the very best dental care possible,” said Dr. Vacharee Peterson, CEO of Community Dental Care.

When all 18 patient rooms are equipped and fully staffed, the clinic will provide oral health services for 10,000 patients annually, with an estimated 30,000 annual dental appointments. The clinic will be the headquarters for oral health services and community oral health programs throughout Southeast Minnesota.

In addition to general dental services, Community Dental Care will offer their nationally recognized community-based preventive education programs for children and parents, training for dental professional students, and will create 35 new, full-time professional jobs for local residents.

Community Dental Care's first location at the Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) Heintz Center remains open with six dental patient rooms and continues to take new appointments.

"We are so happy to support this project, which will create jobs, bring accessible dental care to an area of the state that has demonstrated a significant need, and to do so with a partner who has a proven record of meeting those needs," said Joe Lally, Executive Director of Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation. "We know that oral health is key to overall health, and we believe that every single person deserves a healthy smile. This new clinic will make a substantial impact for thousands of Minnesotans who otherwise would not have access to dental care."

On October 20, community members, elected officials, funders and local organizations gathered to celebrate the clinic's grand opening. Participants included:

- State Representative Nels Pierson (26B)
- State Senator Dave Senjem (25)
- Mr. Joseph Lally, Executive Director, Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation
- Mr. Don Supalla, Executive Director of the Greater Rochester Advocates for Universities and Colleges (GRAUC) and member of Community Dental Care's Rochester Advisory Council
- Mr. Lue Her, Otto Bremer Trust
- Ms. Noor Edward, a patient of Community Dental Care
- Mr. Cedric Long, Board Chair of Community Dental Care
- Dr. Vacharee Peterson, CEO of Community Dental Care

About Community Dental Care

Community Dental Care is one of the largest nonprofit dental clinics in Minnesota and is recognized by the Minnesota Department of Health as one of six successful models statewide providing dental services for underserved communities. Their mission is to provide culturally sensitive community oral health care, preventive education and professional training, and to advocate for access to all. Their vision is that all people will have access to high quality, affordable dental care to improve their overall health in a convenient, caring, and respectful environment. Founded by Drs. Vacharee and Andrew Peterson, the clinic was for-profit for 22 years before incorporating as a nonprofit in 2004. Today, they operate five clinics in St. Paul, Maplewood, Robbinsdale, and Rochester. In 2016, they provided care for more than 46,000 individual patients. Of these, 91% were low-income and 47% were children.

About Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation

In 2009, Delta Dental of Minnesota's parent sold a company and used 100 percent of the proceeds to fund Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation. The foundation supports Delta Dental of Minnesota's mission of improving the health of Minnesotans through oral health. Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation expands access to dental care for Minnesota's underserved populations across the state by investing in programs and organizations that provide dental care to people in need. Since 2011, the foundation invested more than \$25 million in grants to nearly 70 programs and organizations that provide care and promote oral health.

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